

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-01 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 /065 W  
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P R 102145Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7450  
INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO  
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: (OVIP, JIMMY CARTER, OVIP ERNESTO GEISEL), BR  
SUBJECT: GEISEL'S REPORTED REFUSAL OF INVITATION TO VISIT US

1. BRAZILIAN PRESS HAS GIVEN PROMINENT COVERAGE TO REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT GEISEL TURNED DOWN A PERSONAL INVITATION IN MARCH FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES. THE ITEM FIRST APPEARED IN MAY 5 O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO, WHICH SAID THAT GEISEL HAD REPLIED NEGATIVELY TO THE INVITATION, BECAUSE HE DID NOT FEEL AT LIBERTY TO VISIT THE US AS HIS ADMINISTRATION WAS DRAWING TO A CLOSE, AND THAT FOR SIMILAR REASONS HE HAD NOT TRAVELED TO WASHINGTON IN LATE 1976 DURING THE LAST MONTHS OF THE FORD ADMINISTRATION. BOTH O ESTADO AND SUBSEQUENT ARTICLES IN OTHER PAPERS CONCLUDED THAT THE REFUSAL WAS NOT POLITICALLY MOTIVATED BUT RATHER A MATTER OF GEISEL'S PRESIDENTIAL ETHICS. O ESTADO ALSO ALIMED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ACCEPTED GEISEL'S LINE OF REASONING AND ASKED IF IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO INVITE GEISEL'S "SUCCESSOR". O ESTADO THEN STATED "GEISEL RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD NOT OBJECT, BUT GENERAL JOAO BAPTISTA FIGUEIREDO, ALTHOUGH ALREADY ANNOUNCED AS THE NEXT PRESIDENT WHEN CARTER ARRIVED IN BRAZIL, DID NOT RECEIVE AN INVITATION".

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2. PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN COL. RUBEM LUDWIG, ACCORDING TO MAY 6 JORNAL DO BRASIL, STATED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE INFORMATION TO CONFIRM THE O ESTADO REPORT OF GEISEL'S REJECTION OF INVITATION, BUT SAID THAT IF IT WERE IN FACT CORRECT, THAT GEISEL WOULD HAVE TURNED DOWN THE INVITATION "FOR REASONS OF TIME, BUT NEVER BECAUSE OF POLITICAL OR PERSONAL REASONS". ACCORDING TO JORNAL DE BRASILIA,

FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA CONFIRMED THAT INFORMATION IN O ESTADO ARTICLE WAS CORRECT BUT AVOIDED ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER.

3. IN COMMENTING ON EARLIER PRESS SPECULATION THAT PRESIDENT GEISEL MIGHT VISIT AFRICA, SILVEIRA TOLD JORNAL DO BRASIL MAY 8 THAT POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT GEISEL MIGHT VISIT AFRICA THIS YEAR IN SPITE OF FACT THAT "PRESIDENT DOES NOT WANT TO TRAVEL ANYMORE ABROAD". SILVEIRA STATED HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE PRESIDENT TO GO TO AFRICA. SILVEIRA ALSO TOLD JORNAL THAT GEISEL'S REFUSAL OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S INVITATION "IS NOT VALID FOR TRIPS TO OTHER COUNTRIES. WE HAVE A VERY INTENSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US; WE ARE ALWAYS MEETING AT DIVERSE LEVELS".

4. THREE PAPERS CITED PARA 2 CARRIED TEXT OF CARTER'S MARCH 31. LETTER TO SILVEIRA, NOTING PRESIDENT'S REFERENCE TO HIS WARM WELCOME AND THANKING SILVEIRA AND HIS STAFF FOR THEIR COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE IN VISIT. O ESTADO NOTED THAT LETTER HAD ONLY ARRIVED AT ITAMARATY ON MAY 5, WHILE MAY 6 JORNAL DE BRASILIA STATED THAT LETTER WAS OUTSIDE DIPLOMATIC NORMS AS "A MESSAGE OF THIS NATURE SHOULD NORMALLY HAVE BEEN SENT TO PRESIDENT GEISEL (AND UP TO YESTERDAY THERE WAS NOT OFFICIAL INFORMATION FROM THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLANALTO PALACE THAT THIS HAD OCCURRED)." JORNAL DE BRASILIA SAID FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESS SPOKESMAN LAMPREIA HAD APPROACHED TOPIC CAUTIOUSLY, AGREEING WITH ONE QUESTION THAT SUCH A LETTER WAS NOT CUSTOMARY, AND RESPONDING "EVIDENTLY YES" TO ANOTHER QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE LETTER INDICATED A SPECIAL DEFERENCE BY CARTER TOWARD SILVEIRA.

5. EMBOFF CALLED PRESIDENTIAL PROTOCOL CHIEF JORGE RIBEIRO ON MAY 8 TO INQUIRE ABOUT JORNAL DE BRASILIA SPECULATION THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO LETTER FROM CARTER TO GEISEL, POINTING OUT THAT ADVANCED TEXT OF SUCH A LETTER HAD BEEN FORWARDED TO GEISEL THROUGH ITAMARATY ON APRIL 1. EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER GOB WOULD MENTION THIS TO PRESS, ADDING THAT EMBASSY MIGHT DO SO IF GOB DID NOT. RIBEIRO REPLIED THAT GEISEL HIMSELF WOULD REVIEW MATTER LATER MAY 8. RIBEIRO CALLED MAY 9 AND SAID PLANALTO WOULD NOT RELEASE LETTER BECAUSE IT CONTAINED SUBSTANTIVE PASSAGES, AND TO RELEASE IT WOULD VIOLATE "OUR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING" RELATIVE TO SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS

EMBOFF POINTED OUT WE WERE NOT SEEKING A RELEASE OF THE LETTER, ONLY AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY THE GOB THAT PRESIDENT

GEISEL HAD RECEIVED A THANK YOU LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER AFTER HIS VISIT. RIBEIRO SAID HE WOULD SEEK FURTHER REVIEW OF SUBJECT.

6. COMMENT: FOREIGN MINISTRY'S SELF-SERVING COMMENT REGARDING SPECIAL CARTER DEFERENCE TO SILVEIRA IS PROBABLY MEANT, AS FOLHA DE SAO PAULO EDITORIALIST SAID MAY 10, "TO STRENGTHEN THOSE CURRENTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR FOREIGN POLICY, AT A MOMENT WHEN THE NAMES OF THEIR SUCCESSORS ARE BEING CONSIDERED". UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT OBJECTS OR GOB SETS RECORD STRAIGHT, WE INTEND TO INFORM SELECTED PRESS CONTACTS OVER NEXT WEEK THAT PRESIDENT WROTE THANK YOU LETTER TO PRESIDENT GEISEL DATED MARCH 31 AND DELIVERED APRIL 1 SAME TIME LETTER TO SILVEIRA WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DELIVERED. WE WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, RELEASE SUBSTANCE OF LETTER. END COMMENT.  
JOHNSON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, INVITATIONS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
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